

A  
C H A R G E  
TO THE  
GRAND JURY  
OF  
M I D D L E S E X.

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C H A R C E

TO THE

GRAND JURY

OF

M I D D L E S E X

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C H A R G E

DELIVERED TO THE

GRAND JURY

OF THE

COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX,

AT THE

GENERAL SESSIONS OF THE PEACE,

HELD AT THE

SESSIONS HOUSE ON CLERKENWELL-GREEN,

ON MONDAY THE 10<sup>th</sup> OF DECEMBER

1792,

By WILLIAM MAINWARING, Esq.  
CHAIRMAN.

K.

PRINTED AT THE REQUEST OF THE GRAND JURY.

1792

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C H A R G E

GRAND JURY



RECEIVED OF THE CLERK OF THE COURT

THE SUM OF ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY POUNDS

PAID TO THE CLERK OF THE COURT

BY WILLIAM WATKINS ESQ

CLERK OF THE COURT

1811

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I HAVE HEREUNTO SIGNED MY HAND AND SEAL

THIS TWENTY-NINTH DAY OF JANUARY

*Wm*



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**A**

**C H A R G E,**

**&c. &c. &c.**

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**GENTLEMEN,**

**BEFORE** you retire from the  
Court to proceed to your Business, I  
must request you will permit me to  
call your Attention to some Mea-  
sures of great Importance to us all,  
in which the Tranquility and Hap-

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pinefs

pinefs of the Country are moft materially concerned, and which it is your particular Province at this Time, as the Grand Jury for this great and populous County, to enquire into and present.

His Majesty has found it neceffary to iffue a fecond Proclamation, in which it is fet forth, *that the utmoft Industry is ftill employed by evil-disposed Persons within this Kingdom, acting in concert with Persons in Foreign Parts, with a View to fubvert the Laws and eftablifhed Conftitution of this Realm, and to defroy*

*stroy all Order and Government therein; and that a Spirit of Tumult and Disorder, thereby excited, has lately shewn itself in Acts of Riot and Insurrection.*

The Methods which have lately been pursued by evil-disposed Persons, to disturb the Peace and good Order of the Kingdom, to introduce Anarchy and Confusion among us, to alienate the Minds of the People from a due Regard to the Laws and our happy Constitution, are of so alarming a Nature, as to call upon all good Men, upon all who have Property



to defend, or who wish to transmit to their Posterity the Blessings they enjoy under a mild and free Government, to aid and assist in bringing such Offenders to Justice.

Gentlemen, the Constitution of this Country hath long been the Envy and Admiration of other Nations.—The Liberty, the Security, the Protection which every one enjoys in his Person and Property, by the Wisdom of our Laws and the Purity of their Execution, have made this Country the desired Asylum of the wretched

wretched and oppressed.—Here all Ranks are alike protected, all are alike amenable to the Laws, all subject to [the same Punishments, and equally compellable to make Reparation for Injuries committed.—In this Country the Law is no Respector of Persons.—In our Courts of Justice all are equal; high and low, rich and poor, all are alike the Care of our Laws. This is the happy Equality which every one is entitled to, and enjoys, in this Country—and it is the only Equality consistent with any Form of Government,

ment, with any System of Society.

—Equality, in the Sense in which it is now attempted to be inculcated into the Minds of the People, by crafty and designing Men, is, in the Nature of Things, impossible.

The wildest Savages, in the rudest State of Nature, look up to some one as their Chief or Head, to lead and to protect them. The Author of our Being has not made us equal—we cannot make ourselves so. We were meant for Society, and endowed with different Powers and Faculties to assist each other; the strong must



must protect the weak, the weak will contribute to the Convenience and Accommodation of the strong.

—It is the superior Blessing, which God has bestowed on the human Race, to unite us together by mutual Dependence on each other ; from this arise all the Comforts and Endearments of human Life.—Of all Creatures upon Earth Man would be the most wretched out of a State of Society ; no Society can exist without Laws and Regulations for the Support of it ; and those established here are confessed by all Na-

tions to be the best adapted to give Security, Comfort, and Happiness.

You, however, Gentlemen, are no Strangers to the Fact, (for it is too notorious) that Doctrines have of late been maintained and propagated, and Writings most industriously dispersed, with a View to create in Men's Minds Discontent with our Constitution and present Form of Government.—Attempts are daily making to persuade Men they have not those Rights to which they are entitled—to delude and impose upon weak Minds, and excite them to

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Proceedings, which, if not put a Stop to, may be of very serious Consequence to us all.

The Liberty of the Press is one of the glorious Privileges of Englishmen—it is essential to the Liberty of the Subject, to the Existence of a free State, while exercised for lawful and just Purposes; but when it is made use of as the Instrument of Slander and Detraction, to destroy the Comfort and Happiness of Individuals, or to disturb the Harmony and good Order of the State, to mislead and impose upon the weak and ignorant,



ignorant, it becomes the most mischievous and destructive Engine that can be put into the Hands of wicked and ill-designing Men. A Man may injure his Country and violate the Law by the Publication of seditious and inflammatory Writings more than by any other Method; inasmuch as the Poison which such Writings contain is more extensively diffused, more effectually and secretly infused into Men's Minds than it could be by any other Mode of Proceeding.

GENTLEMEN, many well-dispos-

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ed Persons who would shudder at the Thought of committing an Act of Treason, will innocently take a Book to their Closet, and read it; some from mere Curiosity, some from a Desire of Information; and if they have not Judgment to detect, and strength of Mind to resist, the fallacious Arguments and false Reasonings made use of by artful and evil-minded Men to impose upon and mislead, they insensibly fall into the Snare prepared for them; and though they may not perhaps, at first, be worked up to Acts of Outrage

rage and Violence, are gradually lulled into a State of Indifference for the Preservation of that Constitution which they are taught to believe is oppressive, and withholds from Men their just Rights.—These, and a long Train of Evils, are the Consequences of seditious Publications. That we may examine our Constitution—the Principles on which it is founded—may point out Inconveniences—may suggest Improvements—may examine the Conduct of the Ministers of Government—all these, GENTLEMEN, are Privileges which  
every



every British Subject enjoys.—

But the Publication of libellous and seditious Pamphlets and Papers having a direct tendency to subvert and destroy the Constitution, to irritate Men's Minds, to fill them with groundless Jealousies and Discontents, and to bring together a deluded Populace, for the Purpose of altering the Constitution, or coming to Resolutions contrary to the established Laws of the Country—

All this is at once sounding the Trumpet of Rebellion, and inviting evil-disposed or misguided Men, whose Minds have been poisoned by  
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the Promoters of Sedition, to commit Acts of Violence and Outrage, by which the Life and Property of every good Subject will be in danger, and at the Mercy of a lawless Mob, pushed on to desperate Measures by the Hope of Plunder, and establishing an imaginary Equality. When Writings of this Sort appear, it is the Duty of *every one* to use his Endeavours to suppress them, and bring the Offenders to Justice.—But *you*, Gentlemen, in the Situation in which *you* stand, are more immediately called upon to bring forward Offences of this Sort.—If  
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it is within your own Knowledge who the Writers or Publishers are, you are to present them.—If Charges against such Persons are brought before you by Indictment, you will consider them seriously; and if upon the Evidence you hear, you find them proper for further inquiry, you will declare them TRUE BILLS, that the Party accused may be made amenable to the Law, and, if Guilty, may be brought to Punishment.—You are not to try—not to hear and determine the Offence, but only to say whether the Party accused ought to



to be put upon his Trial:—Such is the Caution and Humanity of our Constitution in favour of the Liberty of the Subject, that without your Assent Prosecutions for the highest Crimes which can be committed must stop.—This is a great and important Trust committed to you; in the wise and just Exercise of which, the Safety of the State, the Rights of the People, and the Preservation of the Constitution, are deeply concerned.

However great and heinous Offences may be, the even-handed Justice

tice of this Country proceeds by known, regular, and stated Rules.— You must first declare that the accused ought to be tried; another Jury must hear the Accusation and Defence, and pronounce whether he be guilty or not: so that two Juries must give Sanction to the Proceeding, before Punishment can be inflicted.—Such is the Security which every one has in an English Court of criminal Judicature.

One would have thought the melancholy Fate of those unfortunate and deluded Persons, who suffered the

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dreadful

dreadful Sentence of the Law in  
Consequence of the active Part they  
took in the Riots which disgraced  
this Metropolis in 1780, would have  
been a Warning, at least, as long as  
that Scene of Confusion and Mis-  
chief was recent in every one's Mind  
—but, alas! those Examples do not  
seem to have had the desired Effect.  
—Efforts are making by the Ene-  
mies to our Prosperity and Happi-  
ness to check our Career of Glory,  
and to destroy this beautiful Fa-  
brick, **THE ENGLISH CON-  
STITUTION**, reared and perfect-  
ed



ed by the Wisdom and Experience of many Ages. That Meetings convened, and Affociations formed, for the Purpose of forcing an Alteration in our Laws, and changing the Constitution, are highly criminal, cannot but be obvious to every one of common Understanding, who will give himself a Moment's Time for Reflection. Where three or more Persons assemble together, to do an Act not justifiable by the Form of our Constitution, such a Meeting is an unlawful Assembly—and it is

the Duty of all Magistrates and others, to suppress and prevent such Meetings. The Purpose of the Meeting makes the Assembly unlawful, though the Purpose is not carried into Execution.

If a Number of Persons riotously and tumultuously assemble together, to redress (what they term) Public Grievances, or to alter the established Law of the Land; or attempting, by Intimidation and Violence, to force the Repeal of Laws, or compel the enacting of new ones it is an Act of Treason.

Gentle-

Gentlemen, I need not, when I am addressing myself to Men of your Experience and Situation in Life, detail the several public Offences on this Subject. It is enough to say, that every Act tending to produce a Breach of the Peace—to disturb the Tranquility and good Order of the Kingdom, to create Discontent in Men's Minds with our Constitution and Form of Government, either by Actions, seditious Writings, libellous and indecent Prints, or in any other Way, are all high Offences and Misdemeanors, proper



per for your Inquiry and Presentment.

I cannot dismiss you without adding one Word more, on a Matter which it is fit that *all* should know, if there are any that are ignorant of it.

That every One residing here, and enjoying the Protection of the Law, is bound to Allegiance and Obedience to it.—Obedience to the Law necessarily follows Protection under it.

Therefore it is, that Foreigners dwelling among us, and enjoying our Protection,

Protection, from whatever Country they come, are equally amenable to the Laws, and equally liable to be punished as Traitors, for Acts of Treason committed by them, or for any other Crime they may be guilty of, as if they were natural-born Subjects.

I will detain you, Gentlemen, no longer. I have thought it proper shortly to mention these several Matters to you, with a View of bringing them to your Recollection at this particular Time—not doubting, however, but that you are well acquainted

acquainted with this, and every other Particular of your Duty, and that you are come hither well disposed to exercise the Power with which the Constitution has invested you, with prudent Firmness, with Justice, and with Mercy.

FINIS.

